

## [Rev. J. D. Arnold]

Phipps, [Woody?]

Rangelore

Tarrant Co., [Dist.?] 7 Dup [109?]

Page 1

FC

Rev. J.D. Arnold, 61, was born in La Vaca co., Tex. He learned to ride a horse by herding milk cows before he was 10 Yrs. old. He was employed in 1888, as a cowboy by Tom Daggs, who operated a ranch in Brazoria co., Tex. He quit to work in an East Tex. oil mill, in 1892. He was again employed as a cowboy in 1895 by Henry Skeets, who operated a ranch near Alvin, in Brazoria co., Tex. His cowboy career ended in 1893, when he returned to the oil mill work. His story:

"Yes suh! I knows about de cow pokes an' de wo'k dey does. Course now, I wasn't born on a ranch but a kid is always trying to make a little candy money so I was larnt to ride a hoss so's I could herd [some?] milk cows fo' some folks down whar I was born in [Hallettsville?], [LaVaca?] county, Texas. Now, I might not tell all dis straight enough for some folks but I will do de best I can. I was bo'n on [May?], de 1st, 1877, an' I am now 61 years old.

[?] names of de fo'ks I herded fo' am done plum 'scaped me but 'twas 'bout 20 cows in de herd. I first rode a mule named 'Speedy'. He wassso named 'cause he was so tarnally slow 'bout getting any place. [When?] I was 10 yeahs old, an old trail hand dat had done quit de cow work on 'count of old age, had a couple of cows to herd, an' he had an old hoss dat

## Library of Congress

he didn't want to ride 'cause he was getting so heavy an' de hoss was getting so old. [Me?] being a light weight, he let me ride de hoss an' I plum give Speedy de gate.

"I'd already larned to ride tolerably mall on Speedy, an' do old hoss larned me some mo' 'cause he liked to pitch a little on a frosty mo'ning. I guess I was broke, in on riding hosses like you break in a new car. I just took it easy and by stages so dat I was never th'owed by any hose 'til I tried to do lak de box ers, stage a come-back. [??] 2 I guess I was about 40 yeahs old when I tries it, and I was almost kilt when de hoss starts to jump about a six foot bank wid me-on. I know I was a goner so I eased out of de stirrups so's to light easy. I was laid up fo' 'bout two weeks, an' aint never been aboard since.

"Well, when I was about 11 yeahs old, Tom Daggs, who owned about [25,000?] head of cattle In the Northern part of Brazoria county, hired me as a cow hand. Now, you can't expect me to know much 'bout de business end of handling cattle, but I do know the working end. I don't recollect de Daggs brand. I guess dat's 'cause 'twas just all in de day's work.

"['Twarnt?] so many cullud cow pokes on de place, 'bout four or five. Deys just lak de white punchers, just drift in an' out. We all lived in dugouts when we warnt out on de range, gathering and branding cattle. [?] all had our own hosses dat we broke in ourselves and kept in de regular ranch remuda 'til we [wanted?] one of dem. I don't recollect whar de hosses come from but dey come to de place wild unless dey was sired right on de place.

"Dis hoss busting was a lotta fun when you got a peppery hoss fulla spring steel and a disposition on a par with a Gila Monster on the rampage. De only way to best one of dem when dey gits dis way am to stay wid him or bust. Just for fun, I busted nearly all de horses anywhere I went. As I said, I was never th'owed but it wantt 'cause some of den didn't try to th'ow me and kill me to boot. Now, I know all dis sounds lak bragging but I knew my hosses. Be first thing I did when I went to bust a hoss, was to watch him buck and rave before I ever topped him. You see, all 3 hosses have a certain way to buck. De

## Library of Congress

reg'lar hoss busters in de business have it all class'fied into certain styles. Well, I was just a nigger that had a natural knack of staying on a hoss, and I watched dem so I'd know which way to 'spect dem to jump when dey starts deys rough stuff wid me on deck. I always 'preciated de fact dat one toss could end all my bronc stomping days so I was extra careful in de work, an' had good results.

"When I first started to work on de range, a fence was a cur'osity. I never saw but mighty few. De cattle on de range just got all mixed up through de yeah, den when de roundup came, all de punchers on de different places got together and rounded all de cattle up dat was in sight. When we got 'em all into one herd, den de cow pokes on de best [cutting?] [hosses?], went into de herd and cut out de brands dat b'longed to de men present 'til all de cattle am sep'rated into small herds. 'Twarnt no trouble to tell which calves b'longed to which cow for dey just naturally follered de mammy cow through de herd. Den, when de mammy cow am outside, an' de calf am follering, de calf am branded de same as de brand de mammy cow wears.

"De way to train a hoss to watch your rope 'til it stopped a cow, an' den stop sudden so to keep de rope tight, 'twarnt done in a day. [You?] just had to work wid de hoss an' have patience. Just th'ow an' th'ow 'til de hoss begins to understand. Hosses am more lak humans den you maybe 'spects. Some of dem larns faster dan de [others?]. Every cow poke had from four to ton hosses in his string dat de hose wrangler kept in de remuda 'til called for, an' we always had one or two hosses dat was smarter dan all de rest in 4 our strings. To de best of my 'collection, 'Grey,money' was de best hoss I ever straddled, an' I had him on de Daggs place.

"De Daggs place had de reg'lar Fall an' Spring roundups lak de other places, and had de trail drive to de markets, but I was always kept on de place to do de chores, tend de critters an' sich while de other cow pokes took to de trail.

## Library of Congress

"Another thing 'bout dis 'tending to de different chores an' sich was dat it came in mighty handy at times to have de 'souse to get out of something I didn't lak very much. You know, dat was a wild country in dem days, and 'twas lotse rustlers an' sich goin' 'round from place to place. Dey don't make a thing off de Daggs place 'cause all de waddies am pretty handy wid de rope and six shooter. Sev'ral of dem could trail you right 'cross any place just lak a blood hound. [?] dey [missed?] a bunch of critters, de ram rod would come round and gather de boys all up to take de trail after de rustlers. [Then?] he got to me, I was always on my way to do something real 'portant 'round de place dat just had to be took care of right now. I guess he understood 'cause he don't press me to go. 'Twouldn't do him no good anyway, 'cause I never lost any rustlers an' I sho' didn't went to find any.

"I got a bad fright one day though. I [was?] out hunting strays in a place pretty far from headquarters, an' I can just see de way de thing happened right now. I was riding 'long, minding my own business, whistling some tune, an' riding down into a [creek?] bottom when all a-sudden, I looks right ahead an' I sees two men hanging from a tree wid ropes tied to [deys?] necks. Well, it don't take me long to tell you how quick I got away from dat place. I was dere one minute, den I wasn't. 5 "Not knowing who de men was, I 'ported to de ranch quick as I could. When I 'ported to de boss, he didn't got a big 'cited. He just says, 'Well, [?]. I guess dey just got tired of living', an' turned 'round an' walked off. I studied de proposition over in my mind an' 'cided dat I better take off from dat place myself, so I quit an' lit out for de East Texas Oil Mills.

"'Twouldn't be very easy for me to tell all de places I worked at 'til I went to work for Henry Skeets in 1895, three yeahs after I quit [?] Daggs ranch. I don't 'collect de [Skeets?] brand either. De ranch was to de South of de Daggs place in Brazoria county, and neah Alvin, Texas. I 'spect dat 'twas over 15,000 critters on de place, and dey mixed wid de tudder critters just lak de Daggs cattle did.

"De cow pokes lived on de range just lak de tuddar place too. 'Bout de only difference dat I can 'collect am de boys names. I 'members more of dem. Henry an' Bill Skeets, dey was

## Library of Congress

good riders, an' George Washington, he was a cullud follow lak myself an' was a good all around cow poke. Don, Simon Harrison, he was kinds fair to middling as a cow poke. He was a better yard man den he was a cow poke 'cause he was always piddling 'round de house an' de headquarters yard. One follow I recalls good was George [Waggoner?]. He was a top hand when it came to critters. He could do anything on a hoss that he ever saw done.

“De rustling business was handled de same as 'twas on de other places 'round an' 'bout. 'Twas always a shooting [?] when de rustlers am caught, an' dis heah cullud follow warnt no whar neah when it came off. My cow punching days ended when the Waggoners come down into dis territory and buys up a lot of cattle 6 fo' spec'lation purposes. When dey drives de herd North, I goes 'long for a few miles, den cuts loose an' finds me an oil mill to make my money by.

“To de best of my knowings, dat's 'bout all [?] can tell you 'bout my cow poke days. De only thing I can add to it am de name of de hoss dat lak to kilt me. His name was 'Old Dun', an' it happened on de Butler Ranch in Harris county. I was trying for a job on de place but when I saw dat I couldn't make de grade wid one hoss, I just quit de ranching business for good.

“[Most?] of my life was connected wid de oil mills [til?] I went to preaching de 'Old Time Religion Gospel'. De chu'ch you sees in de buildin 'cross de way am a Missionary Baptist chu'ch, an' I's de preacher. I lives here at 3,000 Cliff street, an, any time you wants to come see me some more, you am more dan welcome.